# Scaling partners step up to take the Africa RISING ESA Project technologies after the project phased out for Tanzania

Agriculture stakeholders, including ESOKO, NIKILIMO, LEAD foundation, and others, commit to continue scaling the Africa RISING validate technologies even after the project phased out in September this year.

Speaking with the project team during the panel discussion, which involved the project scaling partners at the Africa RISING ESA Science and impact review meeting on August 25-26 in Dodoma, Central Tanzania, Silvanus Mruma, a representative from NIKILIMO noted disseminating the technologies has impactful outcomes and benefit farmer majority.

NIKILIMO conveyed interest in scaling the Africa RISING technologies, particularly the soil fertility management tools and technologies led by the alliance Bioversity International and CIAT to farmers in NIKILIMO project areas. Further discussions on the matter are planned.

On behalf of ESOKO, Patrick Kiao commended the Mwanga platform (digital platform involving the use of the mobile phone for timely communication) potential and effective communication tool for the farmer. According to him, the platform provides farmers with timely feedback.

"Currently, we are working with Fred Kizito, Africa RISING East and Southern Africa (ESA) Project manager and an innovator of the Mwanga platform, to upgrade the forum to enable operators to have free access without necessary going through ESOKO backup systems. We have also modified the design. For example, he said, now Mwanga can accommodate the data collection element, which stores multiple data ".

ESOKO was and still backstops the Mwanga platform the ICT platform promoted by the Africa RISING East and Southern Africa Project.

Thanks to the Mwanga platform, at least 17,210 farmers from Iringa rural, Momba, Mbozi , Kilolo, Wang'ingombe, and Babati, among the Africa RISING operation districts, receive and communicate back the SMS on agriculture information on good agricultural practices and nutrition.

Sharing experiences from partnering with the project through TARI-Hombolo, Njamasi Chiwanga from LEAD Foundation said, "It was necessary to look for other reinterventions to combine with our interventions, for example, the ones which would work better in semi-arid areas, dry lands. When visiting villages like Mlali and others (among our project intervention areas), we were interested in Fanya Juu and Chini on farmland. We were unaware of this technology and decided to seek answers from farmers, who informed us they were working with TARI. We were interested and communicated with TARI and opted to pick the technology as an addition to soil and water conservation to address land degradation challenges.

" We scale out all these technologies in all places we operate," he added. Until August this year, through the LEAD foundation scaling partnership, 58,400 farmers in Dodoma region and in two districts of Singida region; Manyoni and Ikungi apply and benefit from the Fanya juu and Chini and other promising agronomic technologies scaled from Africa RISING East and Southern Africa Project.

LEAD foundation partnered with the Africa RISING Project through TARI to promote and scale the technologies proven to reduce soil erosion and increase farmers' yield production and economic gains. These technologies include "Fanya juu and chini" land Insitu rainwater harvesting techniques.

Speaking about achievements, the Kongwa District Agriculture, Irrigation and Cooperative Officer, Jackson Shija complimented the project team for a well-done job. According to him, there are significant changes due to sustainable technologies such as land degradation, seeds availability, and human and livestock health. Therefore, he emphasizes the need for continued effort to face the soil and water issues.

"The livestock initiatives by the project lead done under Kongwa and Kiteto cluster improved the livestock productivity, we now have fast-growing poultry, and the work is still going on. Food safety and nutrition work has led to tremendous changes in our community. Thanks to Prof. Yasinta Muzanila from the Sokoine University and the project team, through the project, we managed to have sensitized the community issue of Aflatoxin, and even the initiatives of the government have been built on that, and Kongwa is among the beneficiary of this initiative.

He noted the benefits of the project's seed multiplication and said, "there is the accessibility of improved seeds for Pigeon pea crop and market at Kibaigwa; Jackson explained before the project, the priority was not producing the pigeon pea. Now Kongwa district is among the country's largest producers of pigeon peas. They also produce the quality sorghum grain varieties promoted by the project. He said," we have made progress, and we now have a contract with the brewer's company that will be purchasing our sorghum. For the past season, sorghum was worth more than 7 billion. The production of QDS for sorghum is happening in all project intervention villages".

Apart from commitment to scaling the project technologies, partners shared concerns on critical challenges and lessons from the Africa East and Southern Africa project; continuous synergies to support farmers, willing and assured resources to scaling partners, and utilization of ICT platform and data availability and accessibility were highlighted as key to potential sustainable partnership outcomes.

Commenting on the partnership approach by the project, the former Africa RISING Program manager, Dr. Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon said she was impressed and touched by the works from panel discussions.

"We heard testimonies of usefulness of having had the Africa RISING project around, the value that the project adds to the NAFAKA-program, this made me very happy, and I think we can be sufficient in such kinds of statements".

Haroon Sseguya, the IITA technology scaling specialist and Africa RISING-NAFAKA partnership project coordinator, facilitated the panel discussions. Other panel members were Patrick Kiao (E-Soko Product Manager), Leonard Sabula, Sylvanus Mruma (NIKILIMO), Njamasi Chiwanga LEAD Foundation, Jackson Shija, DAICO Kongwa, and Betty Maeda-former USAID Agricultural Research Specialist now a consultant.

The science outcomes and impact review meeting were organized by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and the Tanzania Agriculture Research Institution (TARI), as the last meeting upon closure of the Africa RISING East and Southern Africa meeting in Tanzania.

The meeting gathered project implementing partners and the scaling partners to review progress versus the promise made. During the meeting, the implementing partners presented and critically assessed primary project research and development outputs and deliverables and explored opportunities for further scaling of project outputs and outcomes beyond Africa RISING.

At the meeting, scientists marketed technologies /interventions they were working on through poster presentations. The technologies featured socio-economic interventions, ecological intensification, genetic intensification, human conditions, and geospatial tools.

Viewing the project outcome for East and Southern African countries, Africa RISING Chief Scientist, Prof. Mateete, explained that the project succeeded in reaching the objectives at a high percentage despite the constraints, including the Coronavirus pandemic and other managerial issues, pointing out livestock work, which was not fully documented.

"I think this project was unique, and it allowed flexibility. Also, I think we mate the meeting objectives. If it was a pass mark, we got somewhere like 80%, and we did not meet 100% of the meeting outputs since the livestock work has not been documented."

I express my appreciation. It was an opportunity for me to lead this project, it was nice to guide people like you," said Bekunda.

Mateete thanked the IITA administration and leadership, the project steering committee, the project administrations, and the scientists' commitment to the project.

Talking of the following steps after the project phases out, Fred Kizito, explained the plan was to focus on completing the documentation project deliverables. He also used the opportunity to thank the project donor, USIAD, for the long-term support of the project for 11 years.

**Photo gallery**

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The panel discussion \_partnership for scaling\_ panel member sharing their experiences, challenges, and key messages, during the Africa RISING Science outcomes and impact review meeting, at Dodoma region, Tanzania. Photo credits. E. Massam/IITA.

A person speaking into a microphone

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Njamasi Chiwanga, representative from LEAD foundation, speaking partnership for scaling with the TARI experiences. Photo credit. E. Massam/IITA.



Jackson Shija-Kongwa DAICO (right) and Silvanus Mruma, NIKILIMO Project representative, while at panel discussion on topic on lesson from partnership for scaling session during the Africa RISING Science outcomes ad Impact Review meeting at Dodoma, Tanzania. Photo credit. E. Massam/IITA.

